

Koromfe language

Koromfe is a Gur language spoken in a U-shaped area around the town of Djibo, in the north of Burkina Faso and southeastern Mali, bordering Dogon Country.

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Dialects

There are two major dialect areas, most conveniently termed East and West. The traditional centre of the Eastern area is Aribinda and of the Western area Pobé-Mengao. The western area is also known as Lorom (with two short close mid vowels), which should not be confused with the recently created province of Loroum centred on Titao. (Titao is ethnically Koromba, but Koromfe is no longer spoken there.) The grammar of Rennison (1997) describes the Western dialect.

Phonology

	<u>bilabial</u>	<u>labio-dental</u>	<u>alveolar</u>	<u>palatal</u>	<u>velar</u>	<u>glottal</u>
<u>plosive</u>	p b		t d		k g	
<u>nasal</u>	m		n		ŋ	
<u>tap</u>			r			
<u>fricative</u>		f v	s z			h
<u>approximant</u>				j		
<u>lateral approximant</u>			l			

	<u>labial-velar</u>
<u>approximant</u>	w

The alveolar flap [r] is an allophone of /d/, which occurs as [d] only word-initially and after nasal consonants. There also exists a spirantised allophone of /g/, i.e. [ɣ]; phonetic [g] only occurs word-initially, after a nasal consonant, or between two ATR high vowels. Before nasal vowels the approximants /j/ and /w/

Koromfe	
Native to	Burkina Faso, Mali
Native speakers	200,000 (2001) ^[1]
Language family	<div>Niger–Congo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atlantic–Congo<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gur<ul style="list-style-type: none">Northern<ul style="list-style-type: none">Koromfe</div>
Dialects	Koromba <p>Fulse</p>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	kfz
Glottolog	koro1298 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/koro1298) ^[2]

are nasalised, and the nasalised /j/ in slow, careful speech can even harden to [ɲ]. However, there is no phonemic palatal series of consonants in Koromfe.

The vowel system comprises 5 [-ATR] vowels /ɪ ɛ a ɔ ʊ/ and their [+ATR] counterparts /i e ʌ o u/. All vowels occur both orally and (context-free) nasally, and long and short, giving 40 full vowels. There is also a schwa [ə] which alternates with zero and disappears in faster, casual speech.

Koromfe is the only Gur language, and one of only five Niger-Congo languages, listed in the World Atlas of Language Structures that is not tonal.^[3]

Writing system

Koromfe has no written form.

References

1. Koromfe (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/kfz/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Koromfe" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/koro1298>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. <http://wals.info/chapter/13>
 - Rennison, John (1997). *Koromfe*. New York: Routledge. ISBN 0-415-15257-7.

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